



Early Childhood Licensed Program STARS Application

STARS is Vermont's STEP AHEAD RECOGNITION SYSTEM for Child Care, Early Education, and Afterschool Programs, and is a quality initiative of The Child Development Division, The Department for Children and Families, The Agency of Human Services, and The Department of Education



Overview of the Early Childhood Licensed Program STARS Application

The STARS application contains:

1. Application Cover Page (pg. 3)
2. Background and Statistical Information Pages (pg. 4)

And the following Arenas of Action:

1. Regulatory History (1-3 possible points) pp. 6-7
2. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development (1-3 possible points) pp. 8-14
3. Families and Community (1-3 possible points) pp. 15-21
4. Program Practices (1-5 possible points) pp. 22-26
5. Administration (1-3 possible points) pp. 27-31

The points from all five arenas are added together to determine the star level.

Total Number of Points

Star Level

1 to 4 points	One Star Program
5 to 8 points	Two Star Program
9 to 11 points	Three Star Program
12 to 14 points	Four Star Program
15 to 17 points	Five Star Program

**STARS recognizes accomplishments and activities that go above and beyond state regulations.
Thank you for participating in this quality initiative!**

This application is only for Early Childhood Licensed Programs
Organizations that operate multiple licensed sites or programs will need to submit an application for each licensed site or program.

To enter your program into the STARS system, complete and submit this application according to your current program practices and achievements. Once the application process is complete you will receive a three-year certificate. Each year an annual report form is required. You can add points annually as additional achievements and activities become part of your program.

The STARS process is meant to be ongoing. Planning program improvements and implementing them over time as well as keeping records of current activities and practices will make the process most effective.

- The application materials can be grouped by arena.
- **Clearly identify** the documents supporting each arena. Use the boxes in the application to check what has been achieved and to indicate that appropriate documentation is included.
- Binders or other special presentation materials are *not* necessary or recommended.

For assistance with or questions about this application please contact the STARS coordinators at phone number (802) 398-2037 or email (stars@mjcvt.org)

For general questions, contact:

Jan Walker (802)241-2198 Child Development Division	or	Manuela Fonseca (802)828-3850 Department of Education
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To learn more about STARS, please visit www.dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/stars



Application Cover Page for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

My current STARS certificate number is: _____ or ☐ This is my first STARS Application and I do not yet have a STARS certificate number.

Program name: _____

Contact name: _____

Position (owner, director, coordinator, principal, etc.): _____

Director, owner, or principal name (if not above): _____

Mailing address: Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Phone number(s) _____ Email _____

Regulatory status: ☐ licensed center OR ☐ licensed home

License number (required) _____ Date first licensed _____

For each arena, indicate the number of points you are requesting.

Arena	Number of Points you are Requesting	Reviewer Confirmed
1. Compliance History		
2. Qualifications and		
3. Families and Community		
4. Program Practices		
5. Administration		
Total Points you are requesting:		

1 - 4 points	= One Star
5 - 8 points	= Two Stars
9 - 11 points	= Three Stars
12 - 14 points	= Four Stars
15 - 17 points	= Five Stars

Star Level Requested	Reviewer Confirmed

Sign and date on the line below. A STARS representative will sign and return this form when the application review is completed. You will be contacted if there are questions or missing documentation.

Signature of program representative Date

Signature of STARS representative Date



Background and Statistical Information

Program name _____ Date _____
 Contact name _____
 Position (owner, director, coordinator, principal, etc.) _____
 Other contact name _____ Position _____
 Director, owner or principal name (if not above) _____
 Mailing address: Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip code _____
 Town where facility is located _____ County _____
 Phone number(s) _____ Email _____

Program information

1. Regulatory status: ☐ Licensed program ☐ Licensed home
2. License number: _____ Date first licensed: _____
3. Program Affiliation (please check which applies to your program)
☐ Public school afterschool ☐ Private afterschool ☐ Private not-for-profit ☐ Religious program
☐ Waldorf ☒ Site public Mult ☐ One of Multi-site private ☐ Other _____
4. Business entity:
☐ Independent/sole proprietor ☐ C corporation, S corporation or LLC
☐ Not for profit corporation- 501(c)(3) ☐ Partnership or LLP
☐ Public school
5. Type of program offered during regular operation
☐ Full day only (over 5 hours) ☐ Full and part day
☐ Part day only ☐ Other (explain) _____
6. Days and hours of operation (indicate the days and times that the program is open, regardless of whether there are children in attendance).
 Open from _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm (indicate times and circle am or pm)
 Days regularly open: Mon ___ Tue ___ Wed ___ Thurs ___ Fri ___ Sat ___ Sun ___
 Other description (such as summer hours or services on school vacations) _____
7. The program is best described as
☐ Open year round ☐ Open during school year only
☐ Open in summer only ☐ Other (please explain) _____
8. Number of people employed by program: _____ over 30 hrs/week _____ under 30 hrs/week

Enrollment information

9. Total number of children enrolled in program/cared for (full and part time): _____

10. Typical number of children attending on a given day (full and part day): _____

11. In the chart below, enter the number of children enrolled, both full and part time, in the indicated categories. Some will fall in more than one category.

	Infant	Toddler	Preschool	Kindergarten	School age
Current number of children whose families pay the regular or advertised rates/fees (receiving no other support)					
Current number of children enrolled through a public preschool partnership or because the program is a public school managed preschool					
Current number of children funded through scholarships, including the Child Care Financial Assistance Program. <i>Describe type of Scholarship:</i>					
Current number of children with special needs**					

*** Children with special needs are those with a diagnosed or defined developmental, behavioral, medical, or other special need for which there is a formal treatment plan*

* * * * *

I certify that the information contained in this full application is true and correct. I understand that if any information contained in this full application for the STARS program is found to be incorrect, that this application shall be voided and any certificate awarded shall be rescinded.

Signature

Title

Date



I. Regulatory History Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Check one of the statements below and, if the second statement is checked, indicate the number of points requested

☐ No points requested The program is in compliance with all CDD licensing regulations pertaining to regulatory history and no points are being requested for this arena.

☐ _____ (# of points) The program is in compliance and the number of points requested in the Regulatory History Arena of STARS reflects the program's documented history and that it meets the required criteria as described in the information and chart below.

IMPORTANT: The program must have a visit from a CDD licensing specialist within two years of the date of the STARS application. Licensing will be notified by the STARS Coordinators that the program needs a visit. The licensing specialist will perform a standard drop-in visit. The length of time the program has been under operation is determined by the opening date of the current regulatory number.

Point Level	Standard	Evidence to meet the Regulatory History Standards	What to submit for verification
<i>Not Rated/In compliance</i>	The program is in compliance with CDD regulations and within the past 12 months has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parent Notification Letter and has not had any substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of non compliance.	<p>Program has had no serious violations within the past 12 months and is in full compliance with the regulations. Any previous violations have been corrected to the satisfaction of the Child Development Division (CDD)</p> <p>The program has been in operation under CDD regulations for fewer than 12 months</p> <p>STARS Coordinators review status to confirm compliance</p> <p>There is no need for the applicant to submit additional evidence, however if your program has not been visited within the last 2 years the STARS coordinators will request a licensing visit for you.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Signed Application (pages 3, 5 and 7)</p> <p>STARS Coordinator must confirm with CDD that the program has not had a serious violation in the last 12 months.</p>

I. Regulatory History Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Point Level	Standard	Evidence to meet the Regulatory History Standards	What to submit for verification
1 Point	The program is in compliance with CDD regulations and within the past 12 months has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parental Notification Letter and has not had any substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of non compliance.	<p>Program has had no serious violations within the past 12 months and is in full compliance with the regulations. See also guidance in the “in compliance” section.</p> <p>Any previous violations have been corrected to the satisfaction of the Child Development Division (CDD)</p> <p>The program has been in operation under CDD regulations and the same license number for 12 – 35 months</p> <p>A licensing specialist has visited the program within the past two years</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Signed Application (pages 3 and 7) with date of last licensing visit within the last two years</p> <p>STARS Coordinator must confirm with CDD that:</p> <p>--the program has been in operation between 12 and 35 months</p> <p>--no serious regulatory violations have occurred in the last 12 months</p> <p>--there is not a pattern of noncompliance.</p>
2 points	The program is in compliance with CDD regulations and within the past 36 months has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parent Notification Letter and has not had any substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of non compliance.	<p>Program has had no serious violations within the past 36 months and is in full compliance with the regulations. Any previous violations have been corrected to the satisfaction of the Child Development Division (CDD)</p> <p>The program has been in operation under CDD regulations and the same license number for 36 - 59 months</p> <p>A licensing specialist has visited the program within the past two years</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Signed Application (pages 3 and 7) with date of last licensing visit within the last two years</p> <p>STARS Coordinator must confirm with CDD that:</p> <p>--the program has been in operation between 36 and 59 months</p> <p>--no serious regulatory violations have occurred during this time period</p> <p>--there is not a pattern of noncompliance.</p>
3 Points	The program is in compliance with CDD regulations and within the past 5 years has not had any substantiated violations resulting in a Parent Notification Letter and has not had any substantiated violations of the same nature or exhibited a general pattern of non compliance.	<p>Program has had no serious violations within the past 60 months and is in full compliance with the regulations. Any previous violations have been corrected to the satisfaction of the Child Development Division (CDD).</p> <p>The program has been in operation under CDD regulations for 60 months (5 yrs) or longer</p> <p>A licensing specialist has visited the program within the past two years</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Signed Application (pages 3 and 7) with date of last licensing visit within the last two years</p> <p>STARS Coordinator must confirm with CDD that:</p> <p>--the program has been in operation 60 months (5 years) or longer</p> <p>--no serious regulatory violations have occurred during this time period</p> <p>--there is not a pattern of noncompliance</p>

Signature: _____ Title: _____

Date of most recent Licensing Visit: _____

****Applications without a signature will not be processed****



II. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Check one of the statements below and, if the second statement is checked, indicate the number of points requested

☐ No points requested The program is in compliance with all CDD licensing regulations pertaining to Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development and no points are being requested for this arena.

☐ _____ (# of points) The program is in compliance and the number of points requested in the Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena of STARS is based on completing the worksheet on page 11 and attaining the appropriate score. *Details on how to determine staff scores for the worksheet are on pages 12-14.*

Clearly label all documentation of staff qualifications and training and attach to this section of the application.

If you are requesting points in this arena, please check one of the following statements.

☐ _____ Individual Professional Development Plans (IPDP) and all other professional development documentation to support the information on the worksheet have been submitted

☐ _____ Instead of submitting paper IPDP's and documentation of professional development forms and copies of degrees or credentials as part of this application, this information has been entered in the Northern Lights Career Development Center.

I affirm therefore, that all required professional development information is verified and in BFIS. It is understood that the STARS coordinators will access this information in BFIS to confirm the accuracy of this statement. *

Signed: _____ Date _____

*Contact Maureen Young-McCarthy at the Northern Lights Career Development Center professional.development@ccv.edu if you would like further information about ensuring that BFIS has all the required professional development information to support your program's point level request.

II. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Point level	Standard	Evidence to meet the Staff Qualifications Standards	What to submit for verification
Not rated/In compliance	<u>In Compliance</u> means that all program teaching staff or the registrant and any regular staff in his/her program meet applicable DCF/CDD and Department of Education (DOE) standards and regulations for qualifications and annual professional development. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.	Child Development Division Licensing is the source of evidence to affirm compliance	STARS Coordinators review status to confirm compliance No need for applicant to submit additional evidence if program is in compliance
1 Point	<p>All teaching staff members or the registrant have an updated Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or a statement of annual professional development goals.</p> <p>The program or registrant completes the DCF/CDD and DOE approved worksheet that assigns a numerical value to educational level, experience in the field and hours of participation in relevant professional development.</p> <p>The program's average score across all teaching staff, or the registrant's score, is between 0.31 and 1.3.</p>	<p>An IPDP describes current knowledge/skills and the new knowledge/skills to be worked on in the year ahead. An IPDP also describes resources and strategies. Sample IPDP format and information can be found at: www.northernlightscdc.org</p> <p>Documentation of degrees/professional development must be submitted with application <u>Except</u> when it is all verified and in BFIS.</p> <p>Follow guidance on pages 12-14 to complete the worksheet on page 11</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Current (updated within a year) Individual Professional Development Plans for all staff or (for public school teachers) their approved annual professional development goals</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of degrees/professional development for all staff OR Certify it is all verified in BFIS</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed worksheet documenting a program score between <u>0.31 to 1.3</u></p>
2 points	<p>All teaching staff members or the registrant have an updated Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or a statement of annual professional development goals.</p> <p>The program or registrant complete the worksheet described for 1 point.</p> <p>The program's average score across all teaching staff, or the registrant's score, is between 1.31 and 2.3.</p>	<p>Same as above with higher program worksheet score.</p> <p>Remember the STARS Coordinators STARS@mjcvt.org can assist with questions.</p> <p>The staff at the Northern Lights Career Development Center www.northernlightscdc.org can assist with verification and entry of information in BFIS</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Same IPDP/professional development documentation as for 1 Point</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed worksheet documenting a program score between <u>1.31 to 2.3</u></p>

<p>3 points</p>	<p>All teaching staff members or the registrant have an updated Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) or a statement of annual professional development goals.</p> <p>The program or registrant complete the worksheet described for 1 point.</p> <p>The program's average score across all teaching staff, or the registrant's score, is between 2.31 and 3.0.</p>	<p>Same as for 1 and 2 points with higher program worksheet score.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Same IPDP and professional development documentation as for 1 point</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Completed worksheet documenting a program score between <u>2.31 to 3.0</u></p>
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II. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

[illegible]

Create and include in this application larger chart if you have more staff than can be included in above chart.

$$\frac{\text{Total of Column D}}{\text{\# of Staff}} = \text{Staff's average converted score}$$

II. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Consult Chart E on page 14 to determine the program's point level in this arena. This will be the number of points requested for your program (at the top of page 8).

Instructions to complete the Worksheet on Staff Qualifications:

Staff members to be counted are those individuals responsible for planning, implementing, and/or evaluating the program's curriculum (e.g. teachers, teaching assistants, classroom aides, paraprofessionals, and program administrators).

1. Use charts A, B and C to determine a score for all teaching and/or program staff.
2. Convert the score(s) using chart D.
3. To calculate the point level in this arena, divide the total of all the converted scores by the number of staff and refer to chart E.

Chart A. Education	Score
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Career Ladder¹ Level I Certificate</u> OR • Fundamentals course (or NL approved equivalent) OR • On-the-Job-Training Certificate (for afterschool staff) OR • Afterschool Essentials 45 hour course (for afterschool staff) 	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Career Ladder Level II Certificate</u> OR • Current CDA credential OR • 12 related college credits OR • Vermont Afterschool Professional Credential (for afterschool staff) 	4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Level IIIA Certificate</u> OR • Certificate of Completion of Registered Child Care Apprenticeship OR • 21 credits in a related field in at least two of the VT core knowledge areas OR • CCV Early Childhood Certificate 	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Level IIIB Certificate</u> OR • <u>Early Childhood Family Mental Health Credential</u> • Program Director Credential Step 3 • Associates degree in a related field 	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Level IVA Certificate</u> OR • Bachelor degree in related field • Bachelor degree and 30 related college credits in at least three of the VT core knowledge areas 	16
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Level IVB Certificate</u> OR • For early care and education programs only: educator license with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education Elementary Education OR • For after school programs only: an educator license in any area of endorsement 	20
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Northern Lights Level V or VI Certificate</u> OR • Masters Degree or PhD in related field 	25

¹ Descriptions of Northern Lights Levels and the applications for certificates can be found on the Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center website www.northernlightscdc.org on the "Career Ladder"

II. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Information on College Degrees and Related fields:

For people working in Early Care and Education Programs – The degree earned reflects a major or concentration in one of the following fields:

- Early Childhood Education
- Child or Human Development
- Child and Family Studies (including home economics)
- Elementary Education
- Special Education

Information on Related Credits: When the applicant is counting college credit hours toward education level, credit-bearing coursework in one or more of the following areas will be accepted.

- Child or human development
- Education, including special education
- Health, including nutrition and nursing
- Psychology/ mental health/ child and family studies
- Sociology/ human services/ social sciences/social services
- Business / administration (if instruction included early childhood program management)

Important Note: All degrees and college coursework must be from an approved and accredited higher education institution. If you have any questions about this contact the Northern Lights Career Development Center.

Chart B. Professional development in the past year, <u>above the required regulatory minimum.</u> *			
<i>Full-time programs</i>	score	<i>Part-day/part-year program</i>	score
Fewer than 12 hours above	N/R	Fewer than 6 hours above	N/R
12 – 17 hours	1	6 -8 hours	1
18 – 23 hours	2	9 -11 hours	2
24 – 29 hours	3	12 – 17 hours	3
30 – 35 hours	4	18 – 23 hours	4
36 or more hours	5	24 or more hours	5

***Required criteria for professional development and learning activities:**

- Interactive, planned and delivered to a group of participants
- Designed to meet clear objectives for the learner/participants
- Relevant to the person's position or individual professional development plan (IPDP)
- Delivered by a qualified instructor such as one who has demonstrated competence in the subject by being in the Northern Lights Instructor Registry or has national recognition as an instructor or whose position and qualifications are deemed appropriate.
- Documented (Verified professional development and degree information in the individual's BFIS Quality/Credential Account is strongly encouraged.)

II. Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Professional development formats include:

- Workshops
- Classes (college or other)
- Conference sessions
- Formal mentoring relationships

Typical sponsors of professional development include:

- Community Child Care Support Agencies,
- The Department of Education and Head Start

These and other approved trainings are listed in the Bright Futures Information System BFIS-Course Calendar.

Note: No more than one third of the total annual hours counted may be mentor meetings or other individualized instruction

Chart C. Years of experience working in a related field (does not have to be continuous)	Score
Fewer than 12 months	N/R
12 to 23 months	1
2 years up to 5 years	2
5 years or more	3

1. Add scores from Charts A, B and C for each teaching staff.
2. Use the Chart D - Conversion Table below to obtain individual staff scores.
3. Add all of the converted staff scores and divide by the number of total staff.
4. Find your score in the first column of Chart E To the right will be your program's point level in the Teaching Staff Qualifications and Annual Professional Development Arena.

Chart D. Conversion Table

If the staff's person's total is:	The person's converted score is:
0 to 4	0
5 to 11	1
12 to 20	2
21 to 33	3

Chart E. Program Points

If the staff's average converted score is:	The program's point level in the arena is:
0 to 0.3	not rated
0.31 to 1.3	1
1.31 to 2.3	2
2.31 to 3.0	3



III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Check one of the statements below and, if the second statement is checked, indicate the number of points requested

☐ No points requested The program is in compliance with all CDD licensing regulations pertaining to Families and Community and no points are being requested for this arena.

☐ _____ (# of points) The program is in compliance and the number of points requested in the Families and Community Arena of STARS is based on the program's activities and practices as indicated by the boxes checked in the grid below.

Clearly label all Families and Community Documentation and attach to this section of the application.

Point Level	Standard	Evidence to Meet the Families and Communities Standards	What to submit for verification
<i>Not Rated/In Compliance</i>	<u>In Compliance</u> means that the program meets DCF/CDD or Department of Education (DOE) Prekindergarten regulations related to parent/family handbooks and policies, and the program communicates with families as required. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.	Child Development Division Licensing is the source of evidence to affirm compliance	STARS Coordinators review status to confirm compliance No need for applicant to submit additional evidence if program is in compliance

III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

<p>1 Point</p>	<p>The program's practices and policies support and strengthen families by:</p> <p>Collecting annual family satisfaction surveys and using the results to inform program practices or, if applicable, having a school action plan that meets DOE requirements and includes plans for improving the prekindergarten programs.</p> <p>Actively making resources and information available to families.</p> <p>Having a written philosophy about the relationship between families and the program.</p> <p>The program maintains connections with the professional community through participation in at least 4 professional networking activities each year.</p>	<p>Sample Family Satisfaction Surveys, and general guidance on successful outreach to families and the approved family focused trainings for child care providers can be obtained from STARS@mjcvt.org and/or your regional child care support services agency.</p> <p>A recommended goal is to achieve feedback from 80% of families.</p> <p>You may want a parent/family member to provide feedback on your written philosophy statement.</p> <p>Sample networking activities include meetings with expert consultants, community planning groups and specific training that contribute to your program's capacity to understand and support families. The program director or staff representing the program can contribute to the total of 8 hours.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> I certify that a Family Satisfaction Survey is conducted at least once a year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Blank copy of Family Satisfaction Survey</u> The Survey includes questions on daily routines/curriculum, the environment (indoor and outdoor space, materials, equipment etc.) and administration (program policies, communication with families, payments etc).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <u>A summary of the Family Satisfaction Survey process and outcomes</u> This includes the number of surveys distributed and returned, summary of the results and what you/your program has learned and any changes planned as a result. Do <u>not</u> submit copies of completed surveys.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Description of 3 strategies the program uses to share resources/information with families.</u> Describe which strategies are most successful and why.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A written philosophy statement defining the relationship between families and the program.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <u>Documentation and description of 4 professional networking activities</u> (approximately 8 hours).</p>
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III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

<p>2 Points</p>	<p>The program adheres to all standards for one point (above) plus the program’s practices and policies support and strengthen families by providing:</p> <p>Opportunities for families to meet with program staff and other parents through at least 2 social events and 1 group event annually designed to discuss specific content.</p> <p>Opportunities for families to be involved in the program throughout the year.</p> <p>A program that is prepared to serve children with special needs, including children who have been abused or neglected. The program is either a Specialized Services provider or a school-operated program that ensures all staff is trained in policies regarding the care of all children, including children who are at-risk, have disabilities, have been abused or neglected or are in the foster care system.</p> <p>A program that maintains connections with the community to support and advocate for children, families or the profession through participation in family service teams, community-based groups, and similar activities for a total of at least 24 hours per year. Part-day/part year programs may have a total of 12 hours a year.</p>	<p>(Review guidance for 1 point.)</p> <p>Public School programs will submit evidence of training regarding the care/education children who are at-risk, have disabilities, have been abused or neglected or are in the foster care system.</p> <p>See “Families Community Chart A” on page 20 for types of activities that can contribute to the total required community hours</p> <p>Contact STARS@mjcvt.org for information on approved family focused training that may count in this arena as well as in the professional development arena</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The program adheres to all standards for one point.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of the opportunities for families to meet with program staff and other parents that occur annually at two 2 social events and documentation of one family group event designed to discuss specific content.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation/description of at least three ways families are encouraged to be involved in the program throughout the year.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of program’s status as a CDD approved Specialized Care provider is in the CDD Bright Futures Information System OR program is a public school-operated program and ensures all staff is trained in policies regarding the care of all children, including children who are at-risk, have disabilities, have been abused or neglected or are in the foster care system and documentation as to this training is included with application.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation that program maintains connections with the community to support and advocate for children, families or the profession through participation in family service teams, community-based groups, and similar activities for a total of at least 24 hours per year. Part-day/part year programs may have a total of 12 hours a year. (These 24 or 12 hours of community/family connection hours are in addition to the 8 hours required for 1 point.). Specific approved family- focused training may count for up to one half of these hours.</p>
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III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Date	Professional Networking Event	Contact Person for Activity or Event	Name of staff attendee(s)

Families and Community Chart A

To be used to assist in determining hours of families and community “credit” that are awarded for certain activities

Date	Duration	Type of Activity or meeting	Participants or name of agency	Name of staff attendees

Types of activities that are recognized in the Families and Community Arena. Only one program staff member’s participation per activity can be counted

Participate in community events on behalf of the program	8 hours
School Age Children involved in Community Service	8 hours
Host or organize support or recognition events; advocacy	8 hours
Participate in mentoring relationships	8 hours
Children with Specialized Services are enrolled in program	8 hours
Participate in Child and Adult Care Food Program	8 hours
Participate in Families and Community Related Trainings	Actual
Documentation for the one point level	8 hours
Other networking meetings	Actual

III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

**At the Three Point Level, your program may choose to expand its focus on
Strengthening Families OR Leadership**

<p>3 points w/ Strengthening Families Focus</p>	<p>The program adheres to all standards for two points plus the program demonstrates its commitment to strong families, strong communities or a strong profession through:</p> <p>Annually assessing the program's family-strengthening practices using a CDD/DOE approved tool that addresses strategies including: facilitating social connections among parents, parent education, response to families in crisis, connecting families to services and opportunities, support for children's social-emotional development and response to early signs of abuse and neglect.</p> <p>Creating a continuous improvement plan to implement and maintain practices related to strengthening families' protective factors (e.g., parental resilience, social connections, knowledge of parenting and child development)</p>	<p>The approved tool to assess the program's Family Strengthening Practices is The Center for Social Policy Strengthening Families Program Assessment tool available on the following website: http://www.cssp.org/publications/neighborhood-investment/strengthening-families/top-five/strengthening-families-a-guidebook-for-early-childhood-programs.pdf. It is important to read and follow the process recommended to self assess and to include staff, and parents as well as the director.</p> <p>Note: There is no score expected for the Strengthening Families self-assessment process. However the continuous improvement plan should reflect attention to outcomes of the self assessment process.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The documentation for one <u>and</u> two points is submitted and standards are maintained</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Description of the process undertaken to use the Strengthening Families self-assessment tool. Include how staff was included and informed of the results</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A summary of the program's family strengthening practices and the most recent continuous improvement plan. <i>This process of self-assessment and improvement will be documented annually to maintain the three point level in this arena.</i></p>
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III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

<p>3 points w/ Leadership Focus</p>	<p>The program adheres to all standards for two points plus the program demonstrates its commitment to strong families, strong communities or a strong profession through:</p> <p>Providing leadership in the profession through engagement in a variety of local, statewide or national activities and initiatives (e.g., activism, advocacy, teaching, mentoring).</p> <p>Having a written leadership philosophy for the program that details how staff leadership activities impact on the profession and quality of early childhood or afterschool care and education.</p>	<p>Examples of Leadership Focused activities and a chart to assist in documenting and organizing is on page 21 “3 Point Leadership Activity Guidance and Documentation Chart B”</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> The documentation for one <u>and</u> two points is submitted and standards are maintained</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A leadership statement that describes the leadership philosophy of your program and how you and your program play a leadership role in the early childhood and/or afterschool professional community. The name of the person or staff members who participated in writing this statement are included and noted in the Families and Community Chart B.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of 6 examples totaling at least 30 documented hours (15 hrs for part day programs) of how program staff members have engaged in leadership activities as described on page 19.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Description of how the documented leadership activities relate to the program’s philosophy and how you feel the activities impact the profession.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A professional colleague who can speak about the leadership role you and your program play is: Name: _____ Title: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____</p>
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III. Families and Community Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

3 Point Leadership Activity Guidance and Documentation Chart B

At least 6 examples of some or all of the following types of activities that program staff members have engaged in are indicated below and documentation is provided as part of the application. These activities/roles are in addition to those that have been noted for two points. Documentation for 30 hours of these activities is enclosed with this application.

Activities/roles that support the profession—Examples include: Attending meetings of a statewide or national professional organization (e.g. NAEYC/VAEYC, VCASE, VCCICC, VCCPA, VEEU); presenting at a statewide or regional meeting; or instructing a college course.

Statewide activities/roles that support the system—Examples include: Legislative advocacy and participation in events such as Legislative Days or participation in statewide committees reviewing state policies/practices/grants.

Inspirational - Examples include: Author or co-author a professional article; oral presentations such as key notes; provider of formal mentoring locally or statewide; or organizer of a community event, initiative, or collaboration.

Activity or role	Hours	Contact person or sponsor documentation method	Name of leader/ staff participant
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			



IV. Program Practices Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

Check one of the statements below and, if the second statement is checked, indicate the number of points requested

☐ No points requested The program is in compliance with all CDD licensing regulations pertaining to Program Practices and no points are being requested for this arena.

☐ _____ (# of points) The program is in compliance and the number of points requested in the Program Practices Arena of STARS is based on the documentation submitted that corresponds to the boxes checked in the following verification column.

Clearly label all Program Practices documentation and attach to this section of the application.

Point level	Standard	Evidence to Meet the Program Practices Standards	What to submit for verification
Not Rated/In compliance	The program operates as required by regulations related to developmentally appropriate activities, guidance, child-adult activities and care giving. Any deficiencies have been remedied and required corrective action has been completed	Child Development Division Licensing is the source of evidence to affirm compliance	<input type="checkbox"/> STARS Administrators review status to confirm compliance No need for Applicant to submit additional evidence
1 point	The program completes a self-evaluation using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved self-assessment tool and writes an improvement plan based upon self-assessment findings. Staff is involved in the self-assessment, is informed of the results and provides input into the written improvement plan.	Self-assess using an approved tool and write a program improvement plan based on the findings. Staff members provide input and receive feedback in the process. STARS@mjccvt.org can assist in finding mentors. Use one of the following tools to do a self assessment: - Infant & Toddler Environmental Rating Scales (ITERS) - Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of using an approved assessment tool within 6 months of the application (including date and description of staff involvement). <input type="checkbox"/> Program improvement plan based on findings from the self assessment

IV. Program Practices Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

<p style="text-align: center;">2 points</p>	<p>The program completes a self-assessment for one point and is evaluated using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved program assessment tool by an approved validator. Staff members provide input for and receive feedback on the assessment and the program submits a written improvement plan.</p> <p>Also, the program regularly uses observation and other forms of informal assessments to document children's strengths, needs, interests and growth. The program maintains records of this documentation and utilizes the results of this ongoing system of assessment to inform curriculum planning.</p>	<p>The program completes a self-assessment using a CDD/DOE approved comprehensive assessment tool for one point. The program then works with an approved assessor who acts as a mentor supporting the development and implementation of a program improvement plan. Staff members provide input for and receive feedback on the assessment and related plan.</p> <p>No specific score is required at this point level. It is the process that is important, which includes becoming familiar with the tool, developing the plan and working with an approved assessor.</p> <p>One of the following program assessment tools is used: --Infant & Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)</p> <p>Contact the STARS Coordinators at STARS@mjcvt.org for an approved validator.</p> <p>At the 2 point level, programs are free to implement a documented observation process of their own choice. Observations may be documented through checklists, anecdotal notes, work samples, running records, or pictures. Records should be maintained and samples selected to submit with the application along with a description of how the observations inform curriculum.</p> <p>The Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELs) inform educators in the development of curriculum and educational strategies, and can be used as a framework for developing curriculum and program changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of using an approved assessment tool within 6 months of the application (including date and description of staff involvement). <input type="checkbox"/> Verification form from the approved assessor who worked with and/or reviewed the program's use of the assessment tool <input type="checkbox"/> Program Improvement Plan Based on the results of the assessment <input type="checkbox"/> A description of the process of documented child observation that is used to inform program activities/curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> Documentation that shows 2 different observations and a narrative on how the observations were used to develop the curriculum. <input type="checkbox"/> Summary of the results and planned changes to your program based on the child observation/
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IV. Program Practices Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

3 points	<p>The program completes a self-assessment for one point and is evaluated by an approved validator using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved program assessment tool, and the program reaches a specified minimum score on the assessment. Staff members provide input during the evaluation process and receive feedback. The program submits a written improvement plan.</p> <p>Also, the program regularly uses observation and documents children's strengths, needs, interests and growth. The program maintains related records and utilizes the results of this ongoing system of assessment to inform curriculum planning.</p>	<p>Program <u>must</u> be an active participant in STARS and have achieved 1 or 2 points in this arena before requesting an approved STARS assessor at the 3 point level.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Program may be approved to apply for 3 points by the STARS Coordinators STARS@mjcvt.org. This can be done by submitting evidence of having used the approved assessment tool and of developing an improvement plan within the past 6 months.</p> <p>One of the following program assessment tools is used: --Infant & Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)</p> <p>Then contact the STARS coordinators (STARS@mjcvt.org) to ask that an approved validator come to assess your program. The program must meet the minimum score for 3 points. (See required score next column)</p> <p>Staff members create improvement plans based upon findings of self-assessment. The application includes description of how they were involved.</p> <p>At the 3 point level, programs are free to implement a documented observation process of their own choice.</p> <p>The Vermont Early Learning Standards (VELs) inform educators in the development of curriculum and educational strategies, and can be used as a framework for developing curriculum and program changes.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Verification form from an approved STARS assessor indicating that a minimum score was achieved using one of the following program assessment tools:</p> <p>ECERS/ITERS: overall average score of 5.0</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Program Improvement Plan based on the assessment results, and addressing any subscale score below 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation of the following:</p> <p>How the program observes children</p> <p>How the program keeps records to support the observation process</p> <p>How the observation results are used to develop curriculum plans</p> <p>How the staff members are involved in the process</p>
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IV. Program Practices Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

4 points	<p>The program completes a self-assessment for one point and is evaluated by an approved validator using a DCF/CDD and DOE approved program assessment tool, the program has obtained a specified minimum score on the assessment, and staff members have provided input and receive feedback during the evaluation process. The program submits a written improvement plan and evidence that actions specified in previous improvement plans have been completed.</p> <p>Also, the program regularly uses observation and documents children's strengths, needs, interests and growth through the use of a DCF/CDD and DOE approved tool at least twice a year. The program maintains records of this documentation and uses the results from child assessments to inform curriculum planning.</p>	<p>Program must be an active participant in STARS and have 1 or 2 points in this arena before requesting a STARS assessor at the 4 point level.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Program may be approved to apply for 4 points by the STARS Coordinators STARS@mjcvt.org. This can be done by submitting evidence of having used the approved assessment tool and of developing an improvement plan within the past 6 months.</p> <p>One of the following program assessment tools is used: --Infant & Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS) - Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)</p> <p>Then contact STARS coordinators STARS@mjcvt.org to ask that an approved assessor be contacted to assess your program. The program must then meet the minimum score for 4 points.(See required score next column)</p> <p>For programs that have already achieved 4 points in this arena, the CLASS (Class Assessment Scoring System) tool may be used.</p> <p>Staff members create an improvement plan based upon findings of the assessment and describe how they were involved.</p> <p>The current CDD/DOE approved child assessment tools is: Teaching Strategies Gold</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Verification form from STARS assessor indicating that a minimum score using one of the following program assessment tools was used:</p> <p>ECERS/ITERS: overall average score of 6</p> <p>CLASS: average score of each of the 3 domains must be 4 or higher</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A written program improvement plan and evidence that actions specified in the previous improvement plans have been completed. Plan must also address specifically any subscale below a 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A schedule showing that the CDD/DOE child observation/feedback tool was used at least twice a year and a summary of how the results have impacted the curriculum/program.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Description of how staff members are involved in program evaluation and program improvement plans.</p>
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IV. Program Practices Arena for Early Childhood Licensed Programs

<p>5 points</p>	<p>The program holds a current DCF/CDD and DOE approved accreditation or other approved standard, has a written improvement plan based upon the findings of an annual self-assessment, and submits evidence that actions specified in previous improvement plans have been completed.</p> <p>Also, the program regularly uses observation and documents children's strengths, needs, interests and growth through use of a DCF/CDD and DOE approved tool at least twice a year. The program maintains records of this documentation and uses the results from the child assessment to inform curriculum planning.</p>	<p>Program holds NAEYC accreditation (or other CDD/DOE approved national accreditation) OR if a Head Start Program or Early Head Start Program submit a copy of the Triennial Review Cover Letter indicating full compliance</p> <p>Program has clear policies on staff child observation and evaluation of child's interest and engagement in the program and as for 3 and 4 points maintains records of the process and uses the CDD DOE approved tools.</p> <p>The CDD/DOE approved child observation tool currently is Teaching Strategies Gold</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Accreditation is included, or for Head Start Program a copy of the Triennial Review Cover Letter indicating full compliance</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of the program improvement plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Documentation that the program:</p> <p>--uses an approved child observation tool 2 times a year</p> <p>--systematically uses child observations in curriculum planning</p> <p>--maintains records of the process</p> <p>--has a policy regarding child observation that informs program planning and implementation</p>
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**Choose either V(a). Administration for Early Childhood Licensed Programs OR
V(b). Administration for Public School Operated Pre-K Programs (page 32)**

**V(a). Administration for Early Childhood Licensed Programs
(For NOT Public School-Operated Pre-Kindergarten Programs)**

Check one of the statements below and, if the second statement is checked, indicate the number of points requested

☐ No points requested The program is in compliance with all CDD licensing regulations pertaining to Administration Practices and no points are being requested for this arena.

☐ _____ (# of points) The program is in compliance and the number of points requested in the Administration Arena of STARS is based on the program's activities and practices as indicated by the boxes checked in the grid below.

Clearly label all Administration documentation and attach to this section of the application.

Point Level	Standard	Evidence to Meet Administration Standards	What to submit for verification
<i>Not Rated/In compliance</i>	Licensed early childhood programs demonstrate a strong foundation for maintaining an experience well-trained and professional staff. This includes clear policies about fair labor practices, a structure to support appropriate professional growth and a commitment to fair compensation	Child Development Division Licensing is the source of evidence to affirm compliance	<input type="checkbox"/> Check "in compliance" on application No need for applicant to submit additional evidence
<i>1 point</i>	The program has an employee handbook detailing how professional development is supported and how Individual Professional Development Plans are incorporated into staff supervision. Staff members have opportunities to refine their skills through a system of regular feedback and guidance. Also, the program's employee handbook details policies on hiring and firing, benefits, advancement, grievance, sexual harassment and reporting on child abuse or neglect.	Program administrator/staff should review the employee handbook to ensure it is up to date and addresses the standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy demonstrating administrative support for development and implementing IPDP's <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of contract verifying benefits and salary scale

2 points	<p>The program adheres to all standards for one point (listed above), plus staff members working five hours or more per shift have paid breaks within the scheduled work day.</p> <p>Staff members responsible for planning curriculum are given at least one hour per week of paid planning time.</p> <p>Also, all program staff members receive at least two of the following benefits: paid vacation, sick, personal or professional days.</p>	<p>The program adheres to all standards for 1 point (listed above) plus staff members working five hours or more per shift have paid breaks within the scheduled work day.</p> <p>Staff members responsible for planning curriculum have at least one hour of paid planning time per week.</p> <p>Staff receive at least two of the following benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • paid vacation • paid sick days • paid personal time • paid professional time 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Submissions for the 1 point level that also verify benefits for the 2 point level.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Written policy on staff breaks</p>
3 points	<p>The program adheres to all standards for two points (above) plus staff members are provided with written policies addressing a salary system that recognizes professional achievement. The median adjusted pay for all employees is at least 85% of Vermont's livable wage for a "single person without employer paid health benefits".</p>	<p>The program adheres to all standards at the one and two point level plus staff members are provided with written policies addressing a salary system that recognizes professional achievement</p> <p>*The median income for all employees is at least 85% of Vermont's livable wage for a "single person without employer paid health benefits"</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Written policies for 1 and 2 points (above)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Copy of salary system</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Worksheet or other documentation the wage is at least 85% of the livable wage*</p>

***If the program meets the wage standard with salary alone, the wage worksheet (pg. 30) is unnecessary. If the program does not meet the standard with wages, complete the wage worksheet on page 30 identifying health or dependent care benefits.**

List staff members and the information requested in the table below. Attach additional page if necessary. Include all full and part time staff members who are listed on the Qualifications and Training Section. Enter the information from the adjusted wages worksheet into the table below. Include the worksheet with your application if you are requesting three points.

[illegible]

Median adjusted wage (the hourly wage level where 50% of the qualifying staff members fall above and 50% fall below) = _____ per hour.

Median adjusted wage is the hourly wage level where 50% of the qualifying staff members fall above and 50% fall below.

This figure must be greater than or equal to \$ 14.23 per hour. This is 85% of Vermont's 2009 livable wage (\$16.75) for a single person without employer-paid health benefits.

Worksheet for determining median adjusted pay

Quarter of reference (3 months): ____/____/____ (mm/dd/yyyy) to ____/____/____ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Name	Hours worked Per Week	Total Wages Per Quarter	Health Care Related Payment Per Quarter	Dependent Care Payment Per quarter	Cafeteria or flexible spending plan payment Per quarter	Total adjusted wages Per quarter	Weekly adjusted wages (Divide previous column by 13)	*Hourly adjusted wages (Divide previous column by hours worked per week)

***Use the number in this column for the “Hourly Adjusted Wage” column in the chart on page 29**

V(b). Administration Arena for School-operated Pre-Kindergarten Programs

Check one of the statements below and, if the second statement is checked, indicate the number of points requested

☐ No points requested The program is in compliance with all CDD licensing regulations pertaining to Administration Practices and no points are being requested for this arena.

☐ _____ (# of points) The program is in compliance and the number of points requested in the Administration Arena of STARS is based on the program’s activities and practices as indicated by the boxes checked in the grid below.

This number is based on the documentation submitted that corresponds to the boxes checked in the “What to submit” column in the chart below.

Clearly label all Administration documentation and attach to this section of the application.

In Compliance means that the program meets all DCF/CDD and DOE regulations related to policies, required certifications, permits and business practices. Any deficiencies have been remedied and any required corrective action has been completed.

Point level	Standard	Evidence to Meet the Standards	What to submit for verification
1 point	The teaching staff has a contract that includes terms of employment, access to benefits, and a salary scale. The staff supervision process is described and fully implemented. Staff is provided with information on policies related to sexual harassment.	Teaching staff has a contract that includes terms of employment, access to benefits and a salary scale. Staff supervision process is described and fully implemented. Staff are provided with policies related to sexual harassment	<input type="checkbox"/> Copy of contract verifying benefits and salary scale <input type="checkbox"/> Supervision policy and confirmation of implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Policy on sexual harassment
2 points	The program adheres to all standards for one point (listed above) plus provides staff a description of their rights and grievance procedures.	The program adheres to all standards for 1 point (listed above) plus the staff have a description of their rights and grievance procedures	<input type="checkbox"/> Written policies for 1 point (listed above) <input type="checkbox"/> Written policy on rights and grievance procedures

3 points	The program adheres to all standards for one and two points plus has an articulated and fully implemented process for staff supervision and professional development.	Same as for 1 and 2 points and Gather evidence of the “fully implemented process for staff supervision and professional development” as stated in the standard	<input type="checkbox"/> Written policies for 1 and 2 points (listed above) <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of policy describing expectations for regular supervision and reflection and the policy regarding support of DOE and School approved Individual Professional Development Plans <input type="checkbox"/> Sample form for documenting supervision and feedback
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